
CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE DENALI HIGHWAY LANDS, CENTRAL ALASKA



DRAFT

Richard VanderHoek

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Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation



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Cover: Landmark Gap Lake and western Landmark Gap, Denali Block I. The view is looking north, with the Alaska Range in the distance. Photo by B. Wygal, July 28, 2004.

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ABSTRACT

In 2003 the Bureau of Land Management began the process of conveying over 200,000 acres of land in several blocks to the State in areas north of the Denali Highway in central Alaska, as part of Statehood land selections. One of these, termed Denali Block I, contains the northern fifth of the Tangle Lakes Archaeological District (TLAD), a 226,660 acre unit listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This document is to provide guidance in the management of the cultural resources on state lands in the TLAD, and on other state lands in the Denali Highway region.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the State agency with the authority and responsibility for managing resources on state lands, with DNR/Division of Mining, Land and Water responsible for managing the State lands along the Denali Highway. Most of the Denali Highway lands are considered multiple use, with the exception of a special use area that encloses the northern section of the TLAD.

DNR takes over the role of cultural resource manager from BLM, who has actively managed the cultural resources since the 1970s. It is the responsibility of DNR/Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation/ Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) to advise DNR/DMLW on the management of cultural resources on State lands.

The primary mechanism of disturbance for archaeological sites in the TLAD has been Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs). Trails were monitored in the TLAD and the Denali Blocks in 2003, 2004, and 2005, and their impacts on cultural resources assessed.

Resource extraction, road development or modification, and other human activities all have potential to impact cultural resources. This report sets out a series of steps for agencies and commercial interests to follow, enabling them to comply with laws and regulations protecting cultural resources.

This report also sets forth cultural resource protection recommendations for OHA, and guidance for DNR/DMLW on managing the cultural resources in the TLAD and Denali Highway region.